REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 9, 2003. Claims 7-10, 12, and 13 are presented for examination, of which claims 7 and 12 are in independent form. Claims 1-6 and 11 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and will not be mentioned further. Claims 7 and 10 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention, and claims 12 and 13 have been added to provide Applicants with a more complete scope of protection. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claim 9 would be allowable if rewritten so as not to depend from a rejected claim, and with no change in scope. Claim 9 has not been so rewritten because, for the reasons given below, its base claim is believed to be allowable.

A Claim To Priority and certified copies of the priority documents for this application were filed on November 6, 2000, as evidenced by a return receipt postcard bearing the stamp of the Patent and Trademark Office, a copy of which is attached hereto. Applicants respectfully request acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents.

Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,339,214 (*Takakura et al.*), and claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Takakura et al.*

As shown above, Applicants have amended independent claim 7 in terms that more clearly define what they regard as their invention. Applicants submit that this amended independent claim and new independent claim 12, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The present invention relates to an image reading apparatus cable of reading a document or photograph. In conventional systems, as discussed in detail in the specification, reducing the thickness and dimension of the image reading apparatus is difficult to achieve because of the technology used. The present invention addresses this problem by providing an image reading apparatus that is compact in size and having a reduced thickness.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in claim 7 is an image reading apparatus that includes a scanning member, a frame member, a control board, and an interface connector. The scanning member is movable along an original mounting table and includes a reading element for reading an original image. The frame member houses the scanning member. A control board controls the scanning member, and the interface connector is connected to a signal line of an external apparatus and is mounted on a side of the control board. The control board is secured to the frame member at least at one side on which the interface connector is not mounted.

Among other important features of claim 7 are the connections of the interface connector to a signal line of an external apparatus, and the connector's being mounted on a side

of the control board. Support for these features may be found, at least, at page 21, lines 9-15 of the specification.[1]

Takakura et al. relates to an image sensor unit incorporated in an image scanner used for reading images printed on documents. The *Takakura et al.* image sensor unit includes a casing, a light source, at least a pair of mirrors, a lens unit, and a sensor. The Office Action cites Figure 1, element 80, and column 6, lines 3-6, as relating to an interface connector. That Figure, however, merely shows a printed circuit board 8 and an image source unit A connected via a flexible flat cable 80. Nothing has been found in *Takakura et al.* that would teach or suggest an interface connector that is connected with a signal line of an external apparatus and is mounted on a side of the control board, as recited in claim 7.

For at least the above reasons, Applicants submit that claim 7 is allowable over *Takakura et al.*

Independent claim 12 includes a similar feature of an interface connector connected with a signal line of an external apparatus, as discussed above in connection with claim 12. Accordingly, claim 12 is believed to be patentable over *Takakura et al.* Similarly, nothing has been found in *Chiang,* which relates to a flatbed scanner with a self-driven scanning module, that would teach or suggest an interface connector connected with a signal line of an external apparatus.

1/It is to be understood, of course, that the claim scope is not limited by the details of the described embodiments, which are referred to only to facilitate explanation.

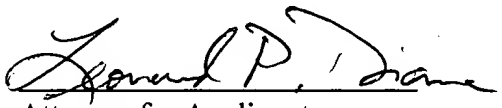
Accordingly, Applicants submit that new independent claim 12 is allowable over the cited prior art.

The other claims in this application depend from one or the other of independent claims 7 and 12, as discussed above, and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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